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not very much more could be said for the infantry—not so much in some cases.

The lancers were followed by the commissariat and control departments, a rabble of men carrying pots and pans and rolls of bamboo matting and boxes intended for ammunition, but containing none, and huge wicker baskets, besides a lot of other baggage which might be useful, but did not look like it. There were five or six hundred of these men, guarded by a handful of dah and spearmen.

In their wake followed the artillery corps; first, thirty or forty two-pounders, similar to those between the different regiments, and with the same complement of men to each gun, and the same appliances. Then the elephant battery, each elephant with two jingals mounted on the howdah. These jingals, throwing a half or three-quarter pound ball, with their long pointed tails and muzzles pointed up to the skies, look very much like telescopes from a distance. In actual warfare they would probably do nothing beyond scaring the elephant. Besides the mahaut, each elephant carried a man to manage the guns. Fifty of them were loaded with this mosquito artillery, and behind them came fifty more with nothing on them but the mahaut. Many were most magnificent tuskers, and they constituted the most valuable part of his majesty's army.

Behind the elephants came the heavier guns, drawn by buffaloes, but they were apt to stick in the heavy, unmade roads, and the buffaloes themselves were not easy brutes to manage, especially on a warm day when their skin begins to crack. This battery, therefore, usually went but a short distance. These heavy guns were mostly very ancient ship guns of Portuguese, Dutch, French, and Arakanese make, and would be considered valuable in an English parish museum. They were formidable to none except primitive mountaineers, and to them chiefly from the noise they made.

As this account shows, Thibaw's army was neither threatening nor efficient, and the events of 1885 bore out the estimate. When the time came for adding Upper Burma to the British dominions it was effected with the least possible amount of bloodshed on either side. It might be supposed from what has been said that the ahmudan

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had no drill, but this was very far from being the case. On the contrary, drill was going on constantly inside the palace and at the various guard stations. The French and Italian officers were always instructing them, but a want of belief in the utility of mass movements rendered all their efforts useless. The recruits went through the balance-step with the utmost enthusiasm; when it came to forming fours they were a little less ardent, but by the time they ought to have been counter-marching and right-forming company they were tired of the whole business and poked fun at the instructor. European officers called themselves, and were called, generals and colonels and what not, but they were simply drill sergeants with very unpromising material. They were allowed no uniform; they never took command on a review day. Occasionally they complained of being insulted by their squads, and were told by a sententious mingyi that patience is one of the ten virtues which go to the making up of a true gentleman. To recompense them for their trials they made a great deal of money in a variety of ways, their salaries being the least part, and paid at long and uncertain intervals in a lump sum. The real "generals" were men who hardly ever came out at all, least of all when there was a chance of fighting. The commander-in-chief was for many months in jail, but still retained his title, and two of his sons remained in command of regiments. The men who managed the reviews and any work that was to be done were all let-thôndaw, the king's pages of honour. Few of them were over twenty, but their duties did not require much experience.

Besides the legitimate drill, conducted by the European instructors, there were other performances, the object of which would hardly be apparent to the compilers of the *Manual of Field Exercise*. The instructor, one of the junior officers, assembled the men in a big circle round about him, and proceeded in a fashion dictated to him apparently by nothing but his own fancy. He threw his gun into the air, caught it and cried *hé!* and the men followed his example to the best of their ability. He went through the same manœuvre behind his back, cried *hé!* again, and the men probably got some hard knocks in dutifully trying to imitate him. He cried *hé* and hunched up his shoulders; cried *hé* and brought

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them down again; slapped one thigh and then the other with a *hé;* pirouetted on one leg and brandished a jointless limb in the air, crying *hé* vigorously, all which performances his squad copied as best they could. The men dropped off as they got tired, and by and by the instructor sat down himself, and the party dissolved or not as it pleased. Laughter, criticism, and applause were constant throughout. This sort of exercise was almost constant in the capital in 1879, and it was pretty nearly the only drill the rural levies ever got. These latter were dressed in the uniform of Mindôn's reign, mostly cast-off tunics and trousers of the Madras native infantry. They wore round soup-tureen-like helmets, with a piece of looking-glass in front. Of these they were very proud, but did not disdain to drink water and eat their dinner out of them. There was only a limited supply of these adornments for the provinces, and as a consequence it was frequent for the man on guard to strip and hand over his uniform to the relief, and then go home happy.

There was no musketry practice. Occasionally on feast-days, or when his majesty went out, there was a lot of powder burnt, but it would have been a very risky matter discharging some of the more ancient firelocks, and so it was perhaps as well that class-firing was not introduced. The artillery never had any exercise. Burmans have not the same respect for big guns that the natives of India have. They imagine that such a big thing as a field-piece is sure to hit something, if it is only pointed in a general way in the right direction, and conclude therefore that any fool can manage a big gun without preliminary practice. King Mindôn appointed a French officer to look after the gunners. This gentleman thought he must do something for his salary—rather an unusual thing with the king's servants—and accordingly as the men could not be induced to drill, took a battery out to the paddy-fields towards Yankintaung for ball practice. There he got the guns into position and commenced firing. Loud sounds should never assail the royal ears, and when his majesty heard the din, he was fiercely enraged. The Kathé Horse were sent out in a body to stop it. The over-energetic Gaul was told that if he had not been an ignorant foreigner, who did not know any better, he would have been made a

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target for his own battery, but the Burman officer was flogged round the town. The guns were stowed away in the palace lest such an enormity might by misadventure be again perpetrated. There they remained till Thibaw Min got them dragged out for his reviews. They had never been cleaned all this time, any more than the infantry arms ever were. He was perhaps less sensitive on the score of noise, but he did not send his gunners out to practise, and they, as a rule, kept their spare clothes and cheroots and betel stowed away in the muzzles of their pieces.

The strength of the army at the disposal of King Thibaw was only limited by the number of men in the country. Every male was liable to serve as a soldier whenever he was called upon, and in 1879, when war with England was momentarily expected, levies of one man from every twenty houses, every twelve, every six, were called out, and finally an ameindaw, or royal mandate, was issued, summoning every able-bodied man in the country to hold himself in readiness for taking the field. But in ordinary times the amount of a Burmese force depended not upon the number of the population, but on the body of men the neighbourhood could feed in a collective state, for it was the district and not the Government that supported them. At the best Thibaw Min could supply not more than 25,000 and 30,000 men with muskets, more or less useless, from long Enfields to ancient flintlocks, which would be most readily induced to go off by putting them on a fire. The method of raising forces was somewhat as follows. The king, with or without the advice of his ministers, decided how many men were wanted, and informed the Hlutdaw, which thereupon issued orders to all the governors of provinces, calling upon them to muster the quota which custom had decided their districts must provide. The provincial rulers then sent their instructions to the myothugyis and taikthugyis, heads of townships and village circles, who in their turn communicated with the subordinate headman of each separate village. This last official, with the assistance of the house-reeves, singled out the men. Substitutes were allowed, and as every thugyi was absolute in his own place, he usually made a very pretty thing out of such a levy, through fines

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and sums given to him to procure another man. The whole district was called upon to pay for the support and equipment of its contingent, and the men who were recruited were usually those who were unable to furnish their share of this tax. But the men who eventually went off as soldiers were not by any means commonly those whom the headman first nominated. He expected to have money extorted from him by his superiors, and made his arrangements accordingly, naming all the wealthiest men in the place in his first list. This method of raising troops is not expeditious, but nothing under Thibaw's rule was expeditious, and it gave abundant scope for palavering and extortion, the two chief accomplishments of the rural officials.

The inhabitants of certain districts, however, were considered the hereditary soldiers of the Alaungpaya dynasty, and these levies were looked upon as forming the standing army. They held their lands by military service and were exempt from all taxation. They considered themselves to be the flower of the service and adopted *Junker* manners. A dragon was tattooed on the back of their necks, just over the shoulders, to signify that they specially belonged to the king, and, strictly speaking, they alone were entitled to the name ahmudan. They mounted guard in the palace, and were almost never required to leave the capital. The chief Alaungpaya districts are in the north, round about Môtshobo, now called Shwebo, whence the founder of the present dynasty came. The rural levies got all the work there was to be done against marauding Shans and Kachins, and garrisoned the various fortified towns along the frontier. Many of these contingents were armed with nothing but spears and dahs. At Minhla, near the old British frontier, where there was a well-constructed fort, was posted the strongest and best-armed detachment out of Mandalay. Near Ava there were three forts: one, the face of the old city wall, an earthen rampart thirty feet thick and twenty feet high, faced on the outside with masonry; a second on the other side of the river at Sagaing, and the third farther up at the bend of the river, at Shwegyetyet. These commanded the river at a point where vessels proceeding up the river had to round a dangerous reef of rocks. But with regard to these

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651 transit dues, and so on, all imposed whenever the district offered an opportunity for them.

A fertile source of profit to the officials were the fees on law-suits and criminal cases, as well as on minor matters, [691] such as the settlement of petty quarrels, divorce suits, and the like, which did not require to be formally tried, but could be settled in the verandah of the thugyi's house over a cheroot or a fid of betel. At the beginning of the year, and on other great kadaw days, special sums had always to be wrung out of the people to furnish the presents required to be offered to the king by all the officials, from the myosa 653 downwards. *Corvées* and enforced duties of all kinds were frequent, and the men selected for such service could only get off by furnishing a substitute, or bribing the tithing man. The king or some great man wanted to build a pagoda, and orders were sent round to the various circles that they must furnish a regular supply of workers daily. The taik or myothugyi drew up a roster, and each man had to go and work for a certain number of days. If he failed to go he was triced up to a post or a tree and got a sound flogging. Similar forced duties were the protection of the frontier and the pursuit of dacoits. Such work was particularly detested, [702] for the men had to keep themselves supplied with food, or get their friends to bring it to them, and this was not always an easy matter. Besides such service might last an indefinite time.

651 Added to all the ordinary imposts were occasional extraordinary contributions to the Crown on the occasion of entering upon war, or upon other public emergencies. The Hlutdaw in Mandalay fixed the amount, and it was divided among the governors of districts. In 1798 a call of thirty-three rupees was made from every house in the country. It was two years before the collection was finished, and the result was six million rupees. But how much more the people paid is quite another thing. Very heavy calls were also made in 1827 to meet the first instalment of the indemnity due to the British after the treaty of Yandabo. The money was sent down at dead of night to the British Commissioners, and all the people were ordered to close their doors and remain inside that they might not see the national

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372. VILLAGE ELDERS IN CONCLAVE.

disperse as quickly as it was recruited or else it might develop into a band under a regular leader (*Bô*) and become the scourge of the country, rapidly attacking points separated by days' journeys. Against such bands the villagers combine and keep guard; torches are ready for night alarms. But when the brigands are too strong, the villagers have no choice but to enter into league with them and pay blackmail if they would not experience the horrors of barbarous war. At present brigandage is of very sporadic occurrence. Travellers are perfectly safe.

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Throughout Burma every man was liable to serve in war. He would have his own sabre and pike and would be provided with musket and ammunition, but no further accoutrements. Latterly the king's body-guards wore a sort of uniform (No. 9). Cannon are mentioned as early as 1350, and a century later, matchlocks were in use. Cæsar Frederick in 1569 speaks of pikes and arquebuses and good cannon. When disbanded, the soldiers had to surrender their muskets, but numbers were smuggled away, to add to the rigour of the guerilla waged by brigands and the severity of the villagers' retaliation.

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373. BURMAN OFFICIAL RECEIVING APPLICANTS.

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The military leader is called *Bô*; the civil governor or minister of the king, *Wun*, which means a burden or trust. The former might be a young man, the latter but rarely so. Age and influence are almost synonymous in Burma. If the elders—headmen, *lôdyt*—are agreed upon a thing, it is done. The village elders represent the fundamental substratum of government in Burma. They are consulted by the officials on matters affecting the people, whose natural, if unofficial,